

# Monumental Brass Society

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OCTOBER 2022



BULLETIN 151

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Contributions to 'Notes on books, articles and the internet' should also be sent to Caroline Metcalfe by 1st January 2023.

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##### Hon. Treasurer's notice

On 1st January all subscriptions for 2022 became due. Please send £25.00 (associate/student £12.50, family £35.00) to the Hon. Treasurer, Robert Kinsey, 4 Pictor Close, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 9XH. Payment can be made using the PayPal system via [mbs\\_brasses@yahoo.com](mailto:mbs_brasses@yahoo.com) or make cheques payable to the 'Monumental Brass Society'. Many thanks to all those members who have completed Gift Aid forms. Any U.K. tax-paying member can enable the Society to reclaim tax on their subscription. The appropriate form can be downloaded directly from [www.mbs-brasses.co.uk](http://www.mbs-brasses.co.uk). U.S. members preferring to pay in dollars can send a cheque for U.S. \$45.00 to Shirley Mattox at 1313 Jackson Street, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901, U.S.A.

## Editorial

Welcome to the October 2022 issue of the *Bulletin*, with me as Guest Editor. I am most grateful for the contributions received from **Richard Dellar**, **Michael Good**, **David Meara**, **Christian Steer** and **Rosalind Willatts**. I have also received considerable technical assistance from our former President, **Martin Stuchfield**, along with some excellent photographs.

The joint Symposium with the Church Monuments Society at King's Lynn in September took place too late to be reported in this issue. It is hoped to include a report in the next issue of the *Bulletin*.

In July 2022 a 13th-century shipwreck in Poole Bay, dubbed the 'Mortar Shipwreck', was granted the highest level of statutory protection by the Government. The wreck was discovered in 2020 by a local charter boat skipper, Trevor Small. It is the first wreck of this date discovered in English waters.

The ship's cargo was Purbeck marble, which may have overloaded the vessel so that it sank little more than one mile off shore. It included mortars (hence the name) and, of great interest to our Society, two brand-new Purbeck marble coffin slabs with raised crosses, in perfect condition. They never reached their destination from the workshop in Dorset.

The wreck awaits detailed publication, but spectacular photos of the coffin slabs on the sea bed can be found by googling 'Poole Shipwreck' or 'Mortar Shipwreck'.

Stephen Freeth

## Personalia

We welcome as new members:

**Ms Florence Eccleston**, St. Leonard's House, St. Leonard's Road, Thames Ditton, Surrey KT7 0RN

**Martin Harrison**, Lime Tree House, Laxfield Road, Stradbroke, Suffolk IP21 5JX (Family)

Cover: Upper part of the figure of Sir Thomas Swynborne, lord of Hammys, mayor of Bordeaux and captain of the castle of Fronsac, d.1412, at Little Horkesley, Essex (part of LSW.I). The church at Little Horkesley was totally destroyed in September 1940 by an aerial mine, but the brasses were recovered in pieces from the ruins and the church has since been rebuilt. The pale patches on the stone which are visible in the photograph are where the slab has been reassembled from broken fragments and filled in with cement.

(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

## Diary of events

Saturday, 29th April 2023

GENERAL MEETING

HAVERSTOCK HILL, LONDON

The series of MBS visits to London churches continues with one to the Dominican priory church of Our Lady of the Rosary and St. Dominic, Southampton Road, London NW5 4LB. The church, built between 1863 and 1883, is largely the



Fig1. St. Dominic's,  
Haverstock Hill.  
Emma Perry, d.1903,  
by Hardman & Co.  
(photo: © Edmund Rogers)



Fig2. St. Dominic's,  
Haverstock Hill.  
Charles Alban Buckler  
(1825-1905), Surrey  
*Herald of Arms Extraordinary*  
and the church architect.

work of Charles Alban Buckler (who was also Surrey Herald Extraordinary). It has an interesting range of brasses from the 1860s to the present day including three major Hardman figure brasses (see **Fig.1**). There is also fine stained glass by Hardman, Lavers & Westlake and Geoffrey Webb (see **Fig.2**) and a rich collection of late 19th-century fittings in the fourteen side chapels as well as a remnant of the medieval London Blackfriars.

The meeting will take place in Blackfriars Hall, adjoining the church, commencing at 2.00p.m. After an introductory talk by **Fr. Lawrence Lew O.P.**, the prior of St. Dominic's, about the history of the church, our President, **David Meara**, will speak about the brasses. There will then be a visit to the church, followed by tea. The final talk, by **Nicholas Rogers**, will be on 'Rosaries on Brasses – and elsewhere'

*St. Dominic's Priory is easily accessible by public transport. It is served by bus routes 24 (from Victoria) and 46 (from King's Cross and Paddington) and is near Belsize Park and Chalk Farm underground stations.*

## Essay competition

The Council of the Church Monuments Society offers a biennial prize of £500 called the Church Monuments Essay Prize, to be awarded with a certificate for the best essay submitted in the relevant year. The prize will only be awarded if the essay is of sufficiently high standard to merit publication in the journal *Church Monuments*.

The competition is open only to those who have not previously published an article in *Church Monuments*. Entrants need not be current members of the Church Monuments Society.

The subject of the essay must be a monument, or related form of commemoration, in a church or churchyard, of any period and location. Entries must be submitted in English. The length (including notes)

should be between 6,000 and 10,000 words, with a maximum of 10 illustrations, preferably in colour.

The closing date for new entries is 31st December 2022. Guidelines for contributors are available on the CMS website. Entrants are also advised to familiarise themselves with *Church Monuments*. Abstracts and indexes can be found at <https://churchmonumentsociety.org/publications/indexes>.

Articles should be sent to both Hon. Journal Editors, who may be contacted for advice on the suitability of a particular topic.

**Jonathan Trigg – jrtrigg@gmail.com**  
**Ann Adams – cmsed.aja@gmail.com**

## Annual General Meeting

### Saffron Walden – 16th July 2022

The delightful market town of Saffron Walden in north-east Essex was the venue for the first AGM in person since 2019 because of Covid. It was also the swansong of Martin Stuchfield, who stepped down as President after 11 years. He had been a member of Council and held roles within the Society for forty-two years: as Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Secretary and President. It was on a childhood visit to Saffron Walden in 1969 that he first saw the brasses, and people taking rubbings. He subsequently became enraptured by brasses, which became a dominant theme of his life.

The formal business took place in the church hall adjacent to the church, and is reported in detail elsewhere. Stephen Freeth presented Martin, much to his delight, with the Victorian key to Little Horkesley church, Essex. The church was destroyed

on 21st September 1940 by an aerial mine. Fortunately it was rebuilt after the War so as to look the same externally, with the important Swynborne family brasses reconstructed from many fragments. Members were able then to explore the town and ruined castle, and to visit the excellent museum with its collection of fragments of brasses especially on display.

In the afternoon some 55 people attended in the great church of St. Mary – the largest in Essex – for joint lectures with the Essex Society for Archaeology and History. The first speaker was **Liz Allan**, who gave an account of the medieval town of Saffron Walden from the building of its castle in the 12th century through to its markets, guilds and many trades, each with their own row in the town, and the building of the town's great church.



*Members in the church at Saffron Walden.  
(photo: © Derrick Chivers)*

The second speaker was **David Lepine**, on the mediaeval clergy and brasses at Saffron Walden. David ascribed the previously unattributed London B priest in mass vestments (LSW.I), with its 1901-renewed Pelican in Piety, to the early 15th-century vicar Matthew West. In 1435 Matthew left his rich benefice for Widdington nearby, perhaps for his retirement. Was he buried in his old church at Saffron Walden? The Pelican feeding its young from its own breast was a mediaeval Christian symbol. Here there is a scroll reading, *Sic Xpi dilexit nos* (*So Christ loved us*). Another Pelican in Piety, with the same scroll, is on the brass at Warbleton, Sussex (M.S.I), to another priest, William Prestwyk (d.1436). Prestwyk and West both worked for the King; were they associates? Did they both choose the same symbol? A plain chest tomb in the north chapel with a brass chamfer inscription commemorates another priest, John Leech (d.1521), vicar 1489–1521 (LSW.VII). He was a clerical high-flyer and fellow of Exeter College and All Souls, Oxford. David discussed all the vicars between West and Leech and their various inscriptions.

During tea we were able to view the various brasses, tombs and indents, in particular the tomb in the

south chapel to Lord Audley. This was the subject of the talk afterwards by **David Carrington** of the Skillington workshop.

Thomas Lord Audley c.1488-1544 was a lawyer, Speaker of the House of Commons, and Lord Chancellor. He worked for Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell, and as a politician did much for Henry VIII. He was rewarded after the Dissolution with Walden Abbey. His fine figureless tomb of black Belgian stone with its tall headstone-like back panel and elaborate carvings was once surrounded by rails (removed 2003). It is currently against the east wall of the south chapel. This is not its original location, and there are plans to relocate it to the north chapel. Although the back panel is still clear, some of the side panels to the chest are very decayed, as was noted nearly 130 years ago.

Our thanks go to Rev. Jeremy Trew, Steve Hasler and staff for permitting the use of the church and church hall; to our speakers Liz Allan, David Carrington and David Lepine; and to Jane Houghton and other helpers for providing the excellent refreshments.

**Rosalind Willatts**

## A.G.M. formal business

The 2022 Annual General Meeting was held on 16th July at Saffron Walden in Essex. Apologies were received and the minutes of the last AGM on 10th July 2021 were approved by the meeting and signed. The Report and Accounts for 2021 were also approved. Paul Larsen, F.C.I.I. was re-elected as Independent Examiner.

The meeting proceeded to elect the Hon. Officers en bloc: David Meara as President for one year only; Nigel Saul, Martin Stuchfield, Nicholas Rogers and Stephen Freeth as Vice-Presidents; Penny Williams as Hon. Secretary; Robert Kinsey as Hon. Treasurer; and David Lepine as Hon. Editor. A presentation was made to the retiring President, Martin Stuchfield, in recognition of his eleven years as President and forty-two years on Council.

The retiring President, Martin Stuchfield, thanked Jon Bayliss and Caroline Metcalfe as the retiring

members of the Executive Council. John Lee, duly nominated, was elected to fill one of the vacancies created.

After the formal business there were talks in the afternoon on aspects of Saffron Walden, its brasses and monuments by Liz Allan, David Carrington and David Lepine. These were given in association with the Essex Society for Archaeology and History.

At the Executive Council on 8th October 2022 the following appointments were approved:

*Hon. Assistant Secretary:* Caroline Metcalfe

*Hon. Bulletin Editor:* Vacant

*Hon. Conservation Officer:* Martin Stuchfield

*Hon. Heraldic Adviser:* Sir Thomas Woodcock, formerly Garter Principal King of Arms

*Hon. Social Media Coordinator:* Challe Hudson

*Hon. Technical Editor:* Matthew Sillence

**Penny Williams, Hon. Secretary**

## The brasses for Sir John and Lady Joan de Northwode, c.1330, at Minster Abbey church, Isle of Sheppey, Kent

1. J.G. Waller, 'On the Brass of Sir John de Northwode and Lady in Minster Church, Sheppey', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, IX (1874), pp.148-163.
2. Ralph Griffin, 'Minster in Sheppey: Notes on Two Brasses in the Church', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, XXXVI (1923), pp.43-46.
3. Rev. W. Bramston, *A History of the Abbey Church of Minster* (1896)
4. Mill Stephenson, *A List of Monumental Brasses in the British Isles* (1926)
5. Malcolm Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials*, I (1977)

The monumental brasses of Sir John (1254-1319) and Lady Joan de Northwode (1257-1320) are set in the chancel floor of Minster Abbey church on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent (**Fig.1**). They differ in style and detail from most other brasses of the same period in England and are considered by all

authorities to be of French origin. The positioning of the shield on Sir John's thigh is customary on French monuments of the period, and the costume of Lady Joan is also in the French style.

The brass of Sir John, measuring 1734 x 453 mm, shows the beginning of the transition from mail to plate armour. The brass of Lady Joan measures 1584 x 435 mm. She wears a long kirtle with tight sleeves terminating at the wrists. A flowing mantle is wrapped around the entire figure with openings for the arms. The mantle is lined with *vair* (a type of fur). Waller describes it as 'a fur-lined hood which hangs in lappets in front'. A similar costume is shown on the figure of Marguerite Loucart from the reign of Philippe IV of France (1285-1314), illustrated at p.214 in *Les Monumens de La Monarchie Françoise* by Bernard du Montfaucon (Paris, 1730). The lady's hair is plaited on either side and the throat and chin are enveloped in a wimple or gorget. The heads of both figures rest on embroidered cushions. Sir John has a lion at his feet and Lady Joan has a dog with a bell collar.



Fig1. The Northwode brasses at Minster Abbey.  
(photo: © Minster Abbey)

### Relocations and restorations

The brasses are now side by side on the chancel floor (albeit with the indent of a lost brass between them), but all previous commentators believe that they were originally separate monuments, possibly even on separate tombs. Waller cites the disparity in height between the two figures as one reason for this premise, a view repeated by Griffin. However the disparity in height is modern. Evidence suggests that originally there was little or no disparity. In addition, Waller's view that the two brasses were separate monuments may conflict with the records of Archbishop Warham which Waller also cites.<sup>1</sup> On 1st October 1511 the churchwardens at Minster applied for assistance in moving the 'pictures' of a knight and his wife who were buried in a chapel at Minster Abbey, as they wished to instal new pews in the same place. They proposed to remove the 'pictures' to a new location, with just an epitaph at the original location indicating who was buried there. This sounds like one single monument to a man and his wife. Griffin dismisses any suggestion that this refers to the brasses, stating that the churchwardens would have installed new pews over them. Norris agrees, because the 'pictures' may have been stone effigies, not the brasses.<sup>2</sup>

Norris too thought the brasses were originally separate monuments, only brought together following the sale of the Cheyne Chapel at Minster in 1581/2. He notes that during a Herald's Visitation in 1619, the two brasses were seen lying together with an inscription attributing them to the founder of the church<sup>3</sup> and his wife but dating them, absurdly, '*ante Conquestum*', i.e. before the Norman Conquest of 1066.

It seems reasonable that the brasses were relocated c.1581/2 after the sale of the Cheyne Chapel. Whether or not they had already been relocated c.1511 must remain a matter of conjecture.

The Warham records describe the figures of the knight and his wife as '*very sore, worne and broken*'. Waller thus emphasises that not only were the figures to be relocated in 1511 but also repaired. Certainly the brasses, and in particular that of Sir John, have undergone restoration. The lower part of Sir John's figure (legs from below the knees, and feet) comprises a separate plate which is clearly of later workmanship. Norris considered that this restoration took place when the figures were relocated c.1581/2, The evidence overall suggests that the repairs were c.1581/2, not c.1511.

Bramston says that prior to their restoration Sir John's legs were not crossed as now, a view shared by both Waller and Norris: i.e. the cross-legged pose was a product of the 16th-century restorers. Griffin disagrees, citing the similar positioning of the knees on the cross-legged brass of Sir Robert de Septvans at Chartham in Kent.

At the time the brasses were restored and relocated, a 130mm section in the middle of the figure of Sir John was removed. According to Stephenson, this was to '*make it correspond [in height] with the lady*', and this 130mm section was restored by J.G. Waller in 1881. Bramston adds that it was requested and paid for by Rev. Curteis H Norwood, rector of Chaffcombe Chard in Somerset, a descendant of the Northwodes. At the same time both brasses were re-laid in new slabs of Derbyshire marble. During this restoration, it was discovered that the 16th-century restoration of the lower part of Sir John was palimpsest, the reverse showing the remains of an earlier lady.

The brass of Lady Joan has a joint across the middle at exactly the same point as that of Sir John, i.e. 875mm from the top of the brass. Three folds in Lady Joan's mantle stop abruptly at this joint, and a similar 130mm section may therefore also have been removed from her brass. Certainly the proportions of Lady Joan are different (i.e. shorter in length in proportion to width) from those of Lady Alyne de Creke at Westley Waterless, Cambridgeshire, of similar date. If such a 130mm section of Lady Joan really was removed, it was not restored by Waller, hence most of the 165mm disparity in height between the two brasses. A very small disparity may have been there from the start.<sup>4</sup> Griffin disagrees that the brass of Lady Joan has changed in any way, considering the proportions to be 'perfect'. **Fig.2** shows a conjectural image of the two figures with a 130mm section in the middle of Lady Joan restored.

### Dates and attribution

Both Waller and Bramston attribute the brasses to Sir John and Lady Joan de Northwode. Griffin, however, thought that the lady is Elizabeth de Northwode (1311-35), wife of Sir Roger de Northwode (1307-61).<sup>5</sup> Stephenson, who knew Griffin well, says that the two brasses are generally assigned to Sir John and Lady Joan de Northwode but that the lady may be Elizabeth de Northwode; and that the knight is *possibly* Sir John de Northwode.

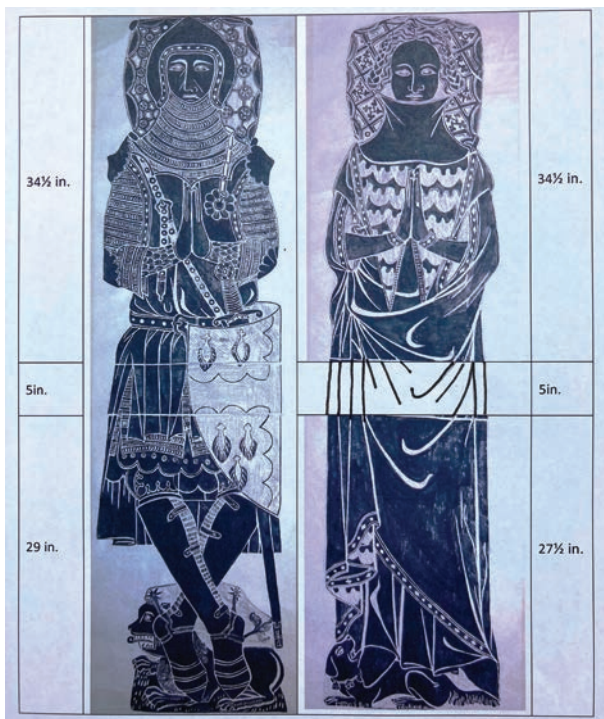


Fig. 2. Conjectural image of the Northwode brasses with a 130mm section in the middle of Lady Joan restored.

If both brasses were commissioned and made in the same French workshop at the same time, as the detail on each suggests, it seems more probable that they commemorate persons who passed away within a similar timeframe. Both Sir John and Lady Joan died in 1319, whereas Lady Elizabeth died in 1335 and Sir Roger not until 1361. It is therefore more likely that the attributions to Sir John and Lady Joan are correct.

Bramston dates the brasses to 1325 although they are generally dated 'c.1330'. The armour and costume of Sir John are similar to the brass of Sir John de Creke at Westley Waterless, Cambridgeshire, now thought to date from c.1340-45. However, unlike Sir John de Creke, Sir John de Northwode does not have plate armour to the arms, suggesting he may be a little earlier. (The plate armour to the legs is part of the restoration so may not be accurate.) Overall, a date of c.1330 seems reasonable.

### Summary (author's opinion):

The brasses of Sir John and Lady Joan de Northwode date from c.1330 and are of French origin. They were relocated in the 16th century, most likely c.1581/2, from the original burial site to the chancel at Minster Abbey. At the same time, probably, the lower portion of the brass of Sir John was restored, and both brasses reduced in height by

the removal of a 130mm section from the middle of each. The brasses were re-laid in 1881 by JG Waller and set in new marble slabs in the chancel floor. The missing 130mm middle section of Sir John was also restored at that time. However, no such restoration was made to the brass of Lady Joan, creating a 165mm disparity in height between the two.

### Later faults and repairs

A small section at the bottom left corner of the brass of Lady Joan (the head of the dog) is separate from the main brass (Fig. 3). This section has ragged edges all round, which suggests that it broke off at some point and was re-fixed. A small section of new brass seems to have been added at the same time. Lady Joan has also suffered from graffiti, the lady's wimple having the initials 'WS' scratched upon it (Fig. 4).



Fig. 3. Broken section at the bottom of the figure of Lady Joan. (photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

### Acknowledgements:

My thanks to David Lepine for his invaluable help and guidance; and to the church authorities at Minster Abbey for permission to rub the original brasses, and for taking Fig. 1 at my request.

**Richard Dellar**

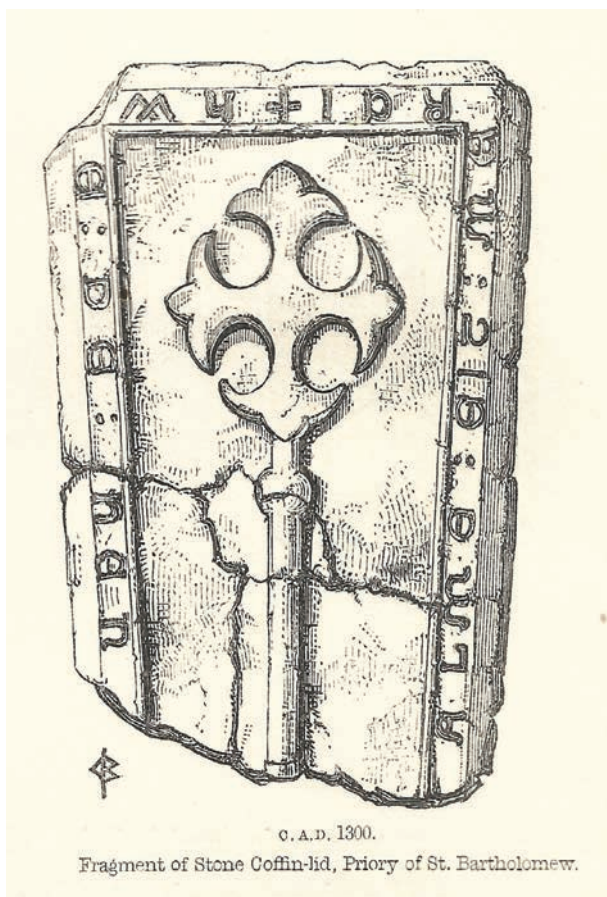
- 1 *The Kentish Visitations of Archbishop Warham*, Wood-Leigh (Editor), Kent Archaeological Society, Maidstone (1984).
- 2 Norris, p.3, pp.278-9.
- 3 Sir Roger de Northwode (1225-86), father of Sir John.
- 4 It is the author's observation that brasses of ladies next to knights often show a small difference in height.
- 5 He was the grandson of Sir John.





*Fig. 4. Head of Lady Joan, showing the graffito upon her wimple, reading 'WS'.  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

## The incised slabs and brasses of the Priory of St. Bartholomew, London



*Fig.1. Incised slab of Hugh de Hendon.  
(From Boutell)*

Next year (2023) will mark the 900th anniversary of the foundation of the Priory of St. Bartholomew, Smithfield, in the city of London. It was originally a house of Augustinian canons but is today better known as the parish church of St. Bartholomew the Great. Its special jubilee will include a new publication on the history of the priory, its relationship with the medieval hospital of the same name, and the developments and changes over the past nine centuries.<sup>1</sup> The Norman church has – miraculously – survived centuries of destruction, neglect, rebuilding and restoration. Yet only one medieval funerary monument has survived, a retrospective commission of c.1400 commemorating the founder, Rahere, who died in 1143.

The remains of a handful of incised slabs of the late 13th and early 14th centuries were discovered

during rebuilding work in the 19th and early 20th centuries.<sup>2</sup> The earliest is of Prior Hugh de Hendon who died in 1295 (**Fig.1**), while that of Simon de Papnei, of about the same date, has recently re-emerged in the cloister (**Fig.2**). Indents for lost brasses are known from antiquarian notes; in 1802, for example, it was noted that ‘under the organ gallery are many broken slabs, on which there have been brass plates’.<sup>3</sup> Our late Vice-President, Fr. Jerome Bertram, found only two indents during his perambulations of the church during the 1980s: in the east cloister walk, set into modern paving (but today loose in the cloisters), a fragment of yellow Purbeck marble with traces of the lower part of a figure of a lady or perhaps an ecclesiastic above a foot inscription; and on the font, for a now lost inscription (**Fig.3**).<sup>4</sup> However an examination of the written evidence – heraldic, antiquarian and testamentary – has revealed at least forty-two monuments of the dead in the former priory church. It has not been possible to identify or date all of them. Nor is it always clear what form they took, although circumstantial evidence suggests that the majority were incised slabs or brasses.



*Fig.2. Incised slab of Simon de Papnei.  
(photo: © Stephen Freeth)*



*Fig.3. The indent on the font.  
(photo: © Christian Steer)*

One of the earliest was for Sir Thomas Bacon of Norfolk, a justice of the king's bench, who died in 1336. The entry in the herald's account in the early 16th century refers to him simply as 'Sir [blank] Bawcon knyght'.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps his inscription was of individual letters set around the circumference of the slab, but with some of the text lost by the time of the herald's visit. Readers will be aware of the magnificent, albeit badly mutilated brass for Elizabeth, the widowed countess of Athol, at St. Mary's, Ashford (Kent). Her second husband, John Malwayn, a scion of a wealthy London family, who died in 1378, was buried and commemorated in St. Bartholomew's. The design of his memorial is unknown, but it may have been just as splendid as his wife's brass at Ashford.

At the dawn of the 15th century there were several other monuments in the church, including Prior John de Carleton (1361), Prior Thomas de Watford (1382) and John Royston, esquire (1387), and a brass of Roger Walden, bishop of London (1406). Bishop Walden was in fact buried amongst his predecessors in St. Paul's Cathedral on 14th January 1406, when his funeral was witnessed and recorded.<sup>6</sup> His brass however had already been set up in Walden's chapel at St. Bartholomew's, where the bishop had intended to be buried. His tomb – a cenotaph – was recorded by both John Stow and John Weever, complete with Latin inscription hinting at the ups and downs of the bishop's fortunes (he had briefly replaced Thomas Arundel as archbishop of Canterbury in 1397-9).<sup>7</sup>

Testamentary evidence during the 15th century includes Thomas Stanlo (1409), a Londoner, who requested a marble stone at his grave near to the image of St. Bartholomew;<sup>8</sup> Richard Brigge (c.1420), Lancaster herald, whose 'stone' is referred to in his widow's will of 1436;<sup>9</sup> John Morys (1432), of the parish of St. Sepulchre-without-Newgate, who referred to his own pre-existing marble stone;<sup>10</sup> Walter Sherington (1448), king's clerk, chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, and a canon of St. Paul's, who specified a raised tomb to be erected at his grave in Walden's chapel;<sup>11</sup> and John Golding (1452), the King's Carpenter, responsible for the roof at Eton College chapel, who had arranged for his own *lapis marmoris* at the font.<sup>12</sup> Thomas Thorold (1480), attorney to Queen Elizabeth Wydeville, instructed his executors to inter his remains 'under the marble stoon which I have don leid there redy where the body of Johan my ffirst wyffe lieth buried'.<sup>13</sup>

Burial in the Priory church remained popular up to the Dissolution. One example is John Clerke (1508), a lawyer, who in his will directed that should he die in London then he was to be buried before the image of St. Ursula in the 'parish chapel' of St. Bartholomew's (Walden's chapel):

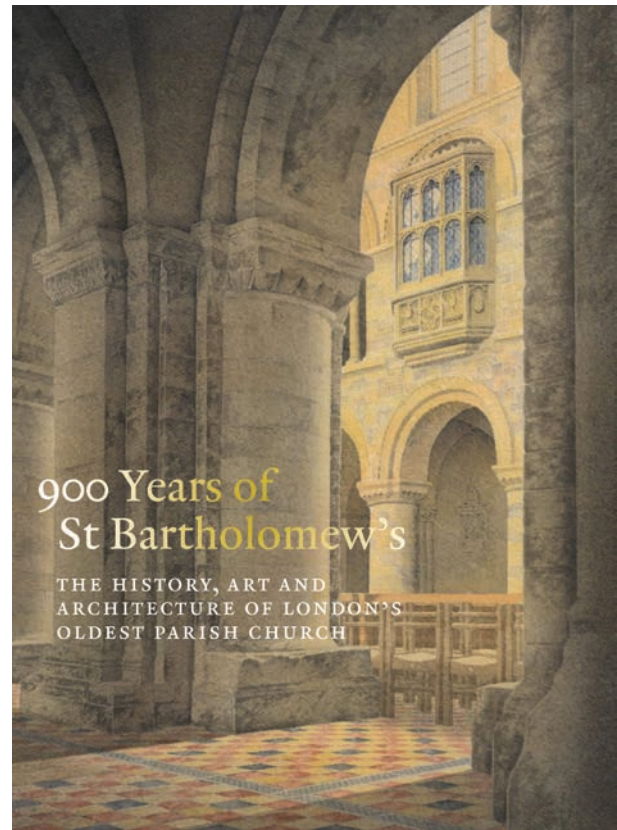
and it is my will that my grave be covered and made playne of marble, the same to have a remembrance of myne auctorite passed and of the day of my departing of this life with a request of prayer for my soule.

Clerke's memorial may have been completely incised onto the marble. His request for 'myne auctorite' to be included in the text indicates his status as a former auditor of the duchy of Lancaster, and baron of the Exchequer from 1504.<sup>14</sup>

It seems there were few tombs for Londoners, and that the church was mostly a mausoleum for servants of Church and State. The anonymous herald who inspected the monuments in the early 16th century was naturally interested in memorials with heraldry, so may have ignored those without it; nevertheless his evidence and that of the probate courts shows that the priory was a popular and prestigious place of burial for visitors to the city. Most of the material evidence for their tombs is long gone, but their memory lives on.

**Christian Steer**

*900 Years of St. Bartholomew's: The History, Art and Architecture of London's Oldest Parish Church*, ed. Charlotte Gauthier (**Fig. 4**), will be published by Paul Holberton Publishing in autumn 2022. Christian Steer discusses the medieval funerary monuments in further detail in his chapter, and Jon Bayliss surveys those from the early modern period. To pre-order a copy please contact [sales@paulholberton.com](mailto:sales@paulholberton.com).



*Fig. 4. The new History.*

- 1 *900 Years of St. Bartholomew's: The History, Art and Architecture of London's Oldest Parish Church*, ed. Charlotte Gauthier (London, 2022).
- 2 Sally Badham and Malcolm Norris, *Early Incised Slabs and Brasses from the London Marblers* (London, 1999), p.51, pp.97-8, pp.108-11.
- 3 James Peller Malcolm, *Londinium Redivivum*, 4 vols. (London, 1802-7), I, p.294.
- 4 Jerome Bertram, 'London Notes (I): Gleanings from the City Churchyards', *Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society*, 14:2 (1987), pp.143-50.
- 5 London, College of Arms, MS C.G.Y. 647, f.40v.
- 6 London, BL, Harley MS 431, f.97v.
- 7 *A Survey of London by John Stow*, ed. C.L. Kingsford, 2 vols (Oxford, 1908), II, p.27; John Weever, *Ancient Funeral Monuments* (London, 1631), pp.434-5.
- 8 London Metropolitan Archives (hereafter LMA), Commissary Register 2, f.141v.
- 9 The National Archives, Kew (hereafter TNA), PROB 11/3/401.
- 10 LMA, Commissary Register 3, f.327v.
- 11 Lambeth Palace Library, Register Stafford, ff.170-171v.
- 12 LMA, Commissary Register 5, f.39v.
- 13 LMA, Commissary Register 6, ff.295v-296v.
- 14 TNA, PROB 11/16/93.

## **‘Young Man of Brass’: a brass-rubbing tour of Norfolk in the early 1970s**

Monday, 15th February 1971 was Decimal Day, when the pound sterling suddenly contained 100p instead of 240 pence. But one Canterbury schoolboy was thinking about a different kind of brass altogether: I was busy planning my first major brass-rubbing expedition in the long school holiday of 1971, with deepest, darkest Norfolk as my goal. Stamped addressed envelopes had been sent out to the incumbents of the churches on my wish-list for gracious permission to rub on a given day, addresses and names having been obtained from *Crockford’s Clerical Directory* and the small county pamphlets about brasses which were becoming available as the brass-rubbing craze became established from the 1960s. A Bartholomew’s half-inch map of Norfolk had been purchased at the high price of 40p (eight bob or old shillings). It was cloth-backed for durability and annotated by me in black fountain pen, with Youth Hostels marked as triangles and those place-names underlined whose churches had brasses which I intended to rub. I preferred the design and pale green colour of Bartholomews to the whiter Ordnance Survey.

Transport was to be provided by my mother’s little Honda 50 motorcycle, onto the rear right pillion pedal of which I had affixed a small wooden platform to support a brown kitbag containing several rolls of detail paper, stored upright and secured to the body of the vehicle with elastic grips, the whole weatherproofed with plastic sheeting. In the heady idealism of my planning, I had purchased the widest as well as the standard and intermediate widths of white paper, which I knew I would need for the large brasses at King’s Lynn and Felbrigg. Accommodation would range from an exposed sleeping-bag in churchyards on fine nights (I don’t think I had room for a tent) to barns, church halls, and with any luck farms and vicarages, plus perhaps an occasional luxurious night in a Youth Hostel for a much-needed wash and brush-up. Such was my ignorance of food – how, where and when to shop for it, how to prepare it or to buy supplies that would need no cooking at all – that in the course of the expedition I would undergo one weekend with no food whatsoever, thanks to the

weekend closure of all shops in those days. I remember losing well over a stone in the course of the trip, as the daily exercise of brass-rubbing burned off unreplenished calories.

All things considered, the trip went remarkably smoothly. I well remember the challenge of rubbing the beautiful hand-holding Harsick brasses at South Acre, with the damaged lower half of the female figure; the relatively clean surface of the latten allowed for a fine, even black finish. The two large Felbrigg figures completely defeated me, so I compromised by taking a rubbing of Sir Simon alone, demanding enough as the close-set box pews allowed little room for manoeuvre. There were of course lowlights as well as highlights. A kind farmer allowed me to sleep in his barn, and then offered me some breakfast: I thought I had struck lucky until he insisted that I eat a freshly-laid egg soft-boiled for a mere two minutes ‘as it ought to be’. Fortunately I did not vomit. There was a rude awakening late one night in a churchyard – I forget where – as a powerful torch was shone into my face by what turned out to be the local policeman, on the hunt for escapees from the local Borstal (those institutions were abolished in 1982). Fortunately my bona fides were deemed acceptable. I completely underestimated the difficulties and sheer exertion involved in rubbing the less worn of the two King’s Lynn plates in St. Margaret’s; I confined myself to an adoring gaze and worship from afar, perhaps a much-needed day off. After all, these huge brasses weren’t really English, were they? The canopied figure of Sir William Calthorpe at Burnham Thorpe proved more manageable, however, and I remember sleeping like a log in that churchyard at least. Somewhere on the scale between highlights and lowlights was the experience of meeting an elderly priest (male of course in the 1970s) who came into the church and announced that he was about to say the daily office: what could I do but put down my stick of heelball and join him? He seemed grateful for the company – and my experience as a Canterbury Cathedral chorister served me in good stead – but even at the tender age of seventeen I could sense his loneliness and perhaps even his disillusion.

Once I had returned via Suffolk and Essex through the Dartford Tunnel – there was only one tunnel in those days, with the second not opened until 1980, and the bridge not even at the planning stage – there was the question of what to do with the resulting collection of rubbings (a problem that many of us have perhaps faced). I had already been experimenting with my own eccentric, completely unscholarly, and aesthetically rather hit-and-miss solution: carefully cutting out the figures, canopies and inscriptions and mounting them section by section on reinforced and framed hardboard sheets, to which a variety of coloured wallpapers had been pasted. The more restrained wallpapers (light greens, light blues) may have worked well enough; but I shudder to recall the bright oranges, dark reds,

and lurid greens that in classic 1970s taste provided the other backgrounds to my rubbings. You can see some of the results in this cutting from the *Kentish Observer* of early 1972 (Fig.1).

My father was a lecturer at Christ Church College Canterbury (known as ‘C4’), then a small Church of England college of several hundred trainee teachers, and now a university of over 15,000 students; he kindly arranged for the college’s small hall to host an exhibition of my Norfolk rubbings. There was a preview, an opening ceremony, some embarrassing speeches, and some journalists’ questions to be answered. In the cutting I am standing beside a rubbing of the Calthorpe brass with Sir Symon Felbrygge, K.G. looking on



Fig1. Young Man of Brass.



Fig.2. MG as teenage Brass Rubber.

disappointingly from the left. In retrospect my King's School Canterbury uniform (black and white, wing collar and tie) matches the rubbings reasonably well. It goes without saying that newspapers were then – perhaps fortunately – mainly black and white, with colour confined to the weekend colour supplements. The journalists in this and other articles did their best to understand the brass-rubbing craze, if you can be bothered to read their copy.

Another shot reproduced in a local paper (and subsequently reprinted in the King's School magazine, *The Cantuarian*) reveals the full horror of the early 1970s schoolboy rebellion: longish hair and flared trousers, just as in Lindsay Anderson's satirical film *If...* of 1968 (Fig.2).

My assemblage of medieval figures was to find a new setting a few months later, when I had the happy idea of transferring the exhibition to become a side-show in the annual summer King's Week Festival. This blend of music, drama and crafts

served to showcase the school at the end of the academic year in the wonderful venues afforded by the Canterbury Precincts. There were Shakespeare plays in the Deanery Garden, concerts in the Shirley Hall and, in the rare late-14th-century timber Pentise attached to the Archdeacon's house known as Chillenden's Chambers, my own exhibition of rubbings (Fig.3). My father's VW dormobile proved invaluable as the framed rubbings were shipped across Canterbury, both inside and on the roof-rack. Oddly enough the Pentise was perfectly suited to an art exhibition (there were others subsequently): visitors could be admitted at the north end, where junior boys took their admittance money on my behalf and provided them with a (mostly accurate) guidebook which I had produced with the help of the Cathedral Library staff and the copying facilities of the Senior Common Room. As visitors approached, they could preview the rubbings within, nicely framed by the timber arches. They exited at the south end, from which they could regain the Green Court at the heart of the school. The proceeds of that exhibition funded several further holidays, not all involving brass-rubbing; and I am quite certain that the thanks I offered to incumbents, farmers, librarians, and school and college staff, and above all to my long-suffering and indulgent parents, were wholly inadequate.

Such was the heady mix of nostalgia and emotion engendered by the M.B.S./C.M.S. coach tour around Oxborough, Narborough, South Acre and Rougham on Saturday, 3rd September 2022, around half a century later.

Mike Good



Fig.3. The Pentise at Canterbury.  
(photo: © Alamy)

## The brass to Thomas Anson, 1st Earl of Lichfield (d.1854), in Lichfield Cathedral

Lichfield Cathedral was extensively renovated during the 19th century by Sydney Smirke and George Gilbert Scott. New furnishings included a fine metal choir screen by Skidmores of Coventry, Minton pavement tiles in the sanctuary, and an alabaster reredos and font. From this period date many fine tombs and memorials. One of the most spectacular is the memorial brass to Thomas William Anson, 1st Earl of Lichfield (1795-1854) (**Fig.1**), originally placed on the nave floor between the pillars on the south side, and now relocated to the north quire aisle (**Fig.2**). It was designed by George Gilbert Scott and made by the firm of John Hardman and Company, one of the finest brasses to come from their Birmingham workshop.

Thomas William Anson (previously 2nd Viscount Anson, 1818-31), was a Whig politician serving under Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne as Master of the Buckhounds (1830-34) and Postmaster General (1835-41), during which time he oversaw the introduction of Rowland Hill's Penny Post. He was admitted to the Privy Council in 1830, and in 1831 was created Earl of Lichfield in William IV's Coronation Honours list (**Fig.3**).

Anson became notorious for excessive gambling and lavish entertaining at his ancestral home, Shugborough Hall in Staffordshire. He amassed huge debts and in 1842 was forced to sell the entire contents of the house in a two-week sale. He was however described by a contemporary as a 'fine fellow with an excellent disposition, liberal, hospitable, frank and gay, quick and intelligent' (Greville). In 1819 he had married Louise Barbara Catherine (1802-79), daughter of Nathaniel Phillips, and they had four sons and four daughters.

Thomas Anson died in London on 18th March 1854, aged 59, and was buried in the family vault in the church at Colwich, near Shugborough. The vault is reached through a door concealed behind the panelling of the choir stalls, and consists of a small square room with three niches for coffins opposite the door and twelve more in each side wall. Fifteen bodies are interred there. A memorial on the wall of the chancel gives the names and dates of his wife and eight children.



*Fig.1. Thomas William Anson, 1st Earl of Lichfield, by Hardman & Co (direct view). (photo: © David Meara)*

His much more splendid memorial brass in Lichfield Cathedral was erected by the officers and men of the Queen's Own Royal Staffordshire Yeomanry, of which Anson had been Colonel. The Yeomanry had been established in 1794 as part of the preparations against French invasion. At first it consisted of a part-time cavalry unit of about three





Fig.2. *Thomas William Anson, 1st Earl of Lichfield, by Hardman & Co (distant view).*  
(photo: © David Meara)

hundred men, but later became a kind of local mounted police at a time of considerable unrest from colliers' strikes, riots and Chartist demonstrations. In 1838 Queen Victoria bestowed the title 'Royal' upon the regiment. The inscription on the brass reads:-

To Thomas William, Earl of Lichfield,  
for twenty years  
Lieutenant Colonel Commandant  
of the Queen's Own  
Royal Staffordshire Yeomanry  
This tablet is erected by the Officers,  
Non-Commissioned Officers  
and Privates of his Corps, A.D. MDCCCLIV  
A memorial of their Respect,  
Attachment and Regard.

The brass shows the Earl under a single canopy wearing his peer's robe, ornamented with ermine, over military dress and with his hands together in prayer. His head rests on his Yeomanry helmet and his feet rest on a lion and seahorse. Above his head is a ducal coronet, and at the top of the slab on either side of the canopy are shields, showing on the left the arms of Anson, *Argent, three bends engrailed and in the sinister chief point a crescent gules*, and on the right, Anson impaling Phillips.

A wide border fillet is decorated with vine leaves and six quatrefoils, showing the Earl's heraldic supporters, a sea horse and a lion guardant, each gorged with a collar. On the top part of the fillet is the family motto, *Nil Desperandum*. The coronet, shields and quatrefoils are filled with coloured



*Fig.3. Thomas William Anson, 1st Earl of Lichfield, by Chester Harding.  
(photo: © National Trust)*

mastic, and the areas between the parts of the brass are filled with coloured encaustic tiles. The brass is laid in a black marble slab with a chamfered edge, 2310 x 1120 mm, and there are contemporary protective railings around the whole monument.

This spectacular memorial was commissioned from Hardmans of Birmingham in 1856. The Brass Order Book in the Hardman Archive<sup>1</sup> for 11th August 1856 records the architect/designer as G.G. Scott, esq. of 20 Spring Gardens, London, and gives the following details:

+ A Monumental Brass, let into Black  
Marble Slab, a Figure with Canopy Arms etc,  
and encaustic tiles let  
Into slab (with edge chamfered), size of slab  
7ft 7ins x 3ft 8ins  
Price £EMD [Hardman's code for £110-0-0]

George Gilbert Scott (1811-78) was a prolific Victorian architect working in the Gothic Revival style. He built and restored many churches and cathedrals, including St. Mary's Cathedral Edinburgh, St. Giles Camberwell, London, and the Martyrs' Memorial in Oxford. He designed the memorial brass to Robert Stephenson (d.1859) in Westminster Abbey, and began restoration work on Lichfield Cathedral in 1857.

The commissioner of the brass was 'Lord Bagot, Blithfield House, Nr Rugeley'. William, 3rd Lord Bagot (1811-87) was MP for Denbighshire 1835-52, and Lieutenant Colonel of the Staffordshire Yeomanry from 1854. As Thomas Anson's successor he naturally assumed responsibility for the memorial on behalf of his fellow officers and men. The Hardman archive contains correspondence from him relating to this brass. On 9th August 1856 he consented to the estimated cost of £110, and urged Hardmans to 'lose no time in finishing the work'.<sup>2</sup>

Hardmans were anxious to engrave a facial likeness of the Earl, and asked the 2nd Earl of Lichfield for a portrait. The Earl regretted that he only had a large picture at Shugborough by Sir Francis Grant (1803-78), a Scottish portrait painter, and invited John Hardman Powell to visit the Hall to see it.

There are further letters from Lord Bagot. The first states that he will be in Birmingham on 2nd December 1856 and will bring all the information required for the completion of the brass. Someone from Hardmans has annotated the letter, *Required – Inscription, Colour of crescent in shield, Details of military dress*. The next letter is dated 12th April 1857:

*Sir, as I should like to see the Brass before it is sent to Lichfield, I will come over to Birmingham the first day I can when I can settle with you as to the sending it to Lichfield, and the fixing it in the Cathedral. - Bagot*

All must have been concluded satisfactorily; the Hardman Index of Monumental Brasses records that the brass was laid down in 1857 in Lichfield Cathedral.

Work has been done to the brass on two occasions since. In 1914 repairs were needed to the inscription, and Robert Bridgeman and Sons of Lichfield were engaged to clean and repair the brass. In 1999, at a time of some reordering within the Cathedral, the Chapter recorded on 15th January, 'Lord Lichfield agreed with the proposal to move the Anson brass'.<sup>3</sup> The brass was then moved from its original position in the nave to the north quire aisle, and at the same time further cleaning and repairs took place.<sup>4</sup> It is an amusing irony that someone who led such a racy and dissolute life should be so handsomely commemorated by one of the most splendid memorial brasses ever to come out of the Hardman workshops

**David Meara**

1 Hardman MS 175/A/4/1/1

2 Hardman Archive MS 175A/4/4/4/208D Letters, Birmingham Library

3 Staffordshire Record Office, Lichfield Papers, ref D615/P(A)/36

4 Information supplied by Lichfield Record Office

## Notes on books, articles and the internet

*Status, Identity and Authority: Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Archives and Heraldry presented to Adrian Ailes*, ed. Sean Cunningham, Anne Curry and Paul Dryburgh, The Coat of Arms Supplementary Volume 2 (London: Heraldry Society, 2021). ISBN 978-0-904858-06-8. xix, 257 pp.

Adrian Ailes's retirement from The National Archives has been marked by this delightful Festschrift touching on his varied interests: heraldry, sigillography and local history. Although none of the articles deal directly with brasses, two touch on the subject. The late Brian Kemp contributed 'A rare Elizabethan episcopal seal' (pp.135-40), which describes the iconographically curious seal of Edmund Guest, bishop of Salisbury, commemorated by Salisbury Cathedral (M.S.II) Sean Cunningham, 'A northerner at home in London? William Smith, Dean of Westminster and Bishop of Lichfield, at home and about town, Christmas 1491' (pp.159-74) gives a fascinating insight into the lifestyle of a prelate who later became Bishop of Lincoln, where he was commemorated by a brass known from 17th-century drawings. These have been used as the basis of a modern replica, illustrated on p.173. In 'Crests of Mowers' (pp.79-93), Thomas Woodcock, our Honorary Heraldic Adviser, contributes a study of the distinctive crests used by three Lancashire families. Only a few of the other contributions can be mentioned here. Steven Ashley, 'Lions confronted on Bigod's Tower: proto-armorial decoration on the forebuilding of Norwich Castle keep and elsewhere' (pp.12-28), touches on the origins of heraldry, a subject that has often received Adrian's attention, as may be seen from the list of his publications (pp.xii-xv). Markus Späth, in an important analysis, 'Magnificence beyond convention: the double-sided seal of "Archduke" Rudolph IV of Austria' (pp.141-56), puts forward the intriguing suggestion, worthy of further investigation, that this seal, datable to 1359, was the work of an English goldsmith.

*Records of the Jesus Guild in St. Paul's Cathedral, c.1450-1550. An Edition of Oxford, Bodleian MS Tanner 221, and Associated Material*, ed. Elizabeth A. New. London Record Society 56 (Woodbridge, 2022). ISBN 978-0-900952-62-3. xvi, 311 pp.

*The Records of the Jesus Guild* presents the records (mainly accounts, but also statutes, deeds and miscellanea) of the Guild of the Holy Name of Jesus that met in the crypt of Old St. Paul's before the dissolution of the fraternities in the late 1540s. The Guild represented a 'cutting edge' orthodox devotion that attracted men and women not only from the upper ranks of London society but from across the whole country. Its records shed valuable light on how a fraternity with a national appeal was organised, and the devotional life shared by some of London's most influential citizens; they also illuminate many aspects of the City's economy and interpersonal relations. The edition includes accounts relating to the take-over of the crypt chapel by the parish of St. Faith. These record how the parish enthusiastically ripped out and sold off Guild furnishings and fittings. (*These probably included the brass of Richard Tabbe, citizen and stationer, d.1490, whose inscription is now a palimpsest reverse at Great Hampden, Bucks. – Editor*) The Introduction sets the Guild and its records in context, and an appendix provides biographies of the Guild's Wardens.

Our member Philip Whittemore has had four articles published recently in *Skyline: The Magazine of the Friends of the City Churches*, in a series entitled 'Where There is Brass':

May 2021, pp.11-12: 'The Brass to John Croke, citizen and skinner [in Allhallows Barking], 1477.'

August 2021, pp.13-14: 'In like a Lion: the brass of Sir John Gayer, alderman, 1649 at St. Katherine Cree.'

November 2021, pp.11-12: 'The Packington monument in St. Botolph, Aldersgate.'

May 2022, pp.8-9: 'Hark the Herald: the Lost Brass to Lawrence Dalton formerly in St. Dunstan in the West.'

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